

Los Padres Objection Issue Summary - Monitoring

Objectors:

- Los Padres Forest Watch (LPFW) et al
- California Chaparral Institute (CCI)

Summary:

In general, the Objectors see the monitoring alternative chosen in the Los Padres National Forest's (LPNF) decision as inadequate.

CCI objects to the USFS's rejection of their proposal that the Forest Service develop a baseline for chaparral data that includes an historical analysis. They state "the USFS's rejection of our suggestion to develop a baseline for the remaining old-growth stands of chaparral because it involved changing goals, ... is not particularly compelling."

LPFW et al objects to the reporting interval (five years) they think too long an interval, and that recommended monitoring changes were not incorporated into alternatives, and particularly Alternative B resulting in monitoring not based on "science-based recommendations".

Review Team Analysis:

The LPNF appropriately applied the 1982 Planning rule requirements to "obtain and keep current inventory data appropriate for planning and managing the resources." Baseline/inventory chaparral data exists for the LPNF and it can be found in the 2006 SoCal LMP analysis. The LPNF has a clear, well-articulated strategy for the development of monitoring questions related to chaparral based on National Strategic Plan desired conditions and goals and objectives that will serve to inform an adaptive management process related to forest planning. No planning requirement exists for the development of a chaparral historical analysis.

LPNF also appropriately applied the 1982 Planning Rule monitoring and evaluation requirements for "periodic determination and evaluation of the effects of management practices..." (36 CFR 219.11 (d)); a quantitative estimate of performance; (36 CFR 219.12 (k)(1)); "documentation of the measured prescriptions and effects..." (36 CFR 219.12 (k)(2)); and "a description of ...the actions, effects, or resources to be measured, and the frequency of measurements" (36 CFR 219.12 (k)(4)(i)). Tables in Appendix 3 clearly display this required information. No particular periodicity of evaluation is required and the Forest used their discretion to determine that five years was an appropriate and cost effective reporting interval. This interval is the same interval as exists in the current LMP. In the FSEIS, the LPNF considered three monitoring alternatives including Alternative C which provides for more intensive inventories and surveys than the current monitoring plan or Alternative B. The LPNF considered a full range of alternatives, and including additional monitoring in Alternative B would create a less distinct range of alternatives

REMEDY(S) PROPOSED BY OBJECTORS

- We (LP Forest Watch et al.) ask the Forest Service to consider revising the proposed decision to include more frequent monitoring and to adopt additional science-based monitoring protocols that will provide adequate information to managers regarding key resources in order to ensure resources are protected and adaptive management is utilized where needed.
- Reconsideration of the California Chaparral Institute's recommendation to develop a baseline for the remaining old-growth stands of chaparral that includes historical analysis.

INSTRUCTIONS BEING CONSIDERED

- No instructions are recommended.